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THE  
CONSCIENCE  
PLEADING FOR  
Its owne Liberty.

BEING  
*The Summe of an excellent Discourse.*

Wherein is pathetically proved,  
both by *Scripture* and *Reason*, how farre a free Tol-  
eration of *Religion* may be granted, and how farre  
not, as it now stands with the Affaires of the  
STATE.

Humbly presented to his *Excellency* Sir THO:  
FAIRFAX, and those Generous Spirits under  
his COMMAND.

*Doct. 13/6*

By JOHN MUSGRAVE.

A sufferer for *Truth*, and *Justice*, till this last and unex-  
pected deliverance by the ARMY.

*Read, and then Judge.*

LONDON,

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*Wm. Boothby*

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THE ASSOCIATION

is owing Liberty.



*To the Reader.*

**I**N the beginning of these our late troubles and Civil warres, I was imprison<sup>d</sup> by the Justices of the Peace, and Commissioners of Array in Cumberland, maintaining the Parliamentary Protestations, and opposing the Arbitrary and Tyrannicall Government of our corrupt Magistracy and Ministry there: after a long and chargeable Imprisonment, I was removed by an *Habeas Corpus* to London, and freed by Parliament Authority: but upon my returne back into my Countrey, I was constrained to undergo a voluntary exile in Scotland, most part of two years, even till the reducement of that Countrey to obedience of Parliament; hoping to have found such place in Authorities there, as had beene of approved Integrity, and men hating Covetousnesse.

I returned to my Countrey, but contrary to my expectations, finding the Militia and Authorities there, settled in the hands of such as were the sworne and professed enemies of the Kingdome: I and some other exiles for

the Parliaments cause, by certain Propositions represented our grievances, and made knowne to the Parliament Commissioners how the Militia and Authorities with us were intrusted to declared Traitors; but the Parliament Commissioners would not redresse our grievances: Afterwards Mr *Osmotherley* and I, were sent to London, to petition the Parliament, in the behalt of the well affected of Cumberland and Westmerland: after we had attended the Parliament some four moneths, upon a false report of the Chair-man of the Committee, I was committed to the prison of the Fleet, by an Order of the house of Commons, where I have beene prisoner: yet in all that time, could I never have accessse unto Justice. During my restraint here, reading the History of the Netherlands, I found the rise and growth of the warres and troubles of those Provinces, was not so much from the dissenting Opinions in matters of Religion; as from pride and covetousnesse of the King of Spaines evil Counsellours, and worser Ministers of Justice; who under a counterfeit zeale and pretext of settling Church Government, abusing this their Princes favour and their authority, went about to lay a foundation of their own greatnesse, in the ruines of the people, and to enrich themselves by impoverishing and subjecting those Provinces to their lawlesse wills and Tyranny: and the more easie to bring that people under their Iron yoke, they set up the Spanish Inquisition, where-from to free themselves, they were constrained to take up Arms in defence of themselves, and for preservation of their almost overthrown Liberties: but finding no reconciliation could be had, relying upon the equity and justice of their cause, by publike Edict, did  
declare



declare the King of Spain to bee fallen from the Seignory and authority he had in and over those Provinces; a good cution for Princes by oppression not to lose the affection of their people. In France a fire was kindled, which the blood of millions could not quench, till free exercise of Religion was granted.

The bloody wars, and fearful massacres and cruel murders in Germany upon the denying the Protestants there their Liberty, were so great and many, as the same indangered the utter devastation of that great Empire.

If wee take a view of the hot persecutions of the Popish Prelates here in England, in Queene *Maries* dayes: wee shall finde the same, the very cause and grounds of those severe Lawes enacted by her sister, against Papists and their Priests: our late Bishops and their Clergy, were so puffed up with pride, as they could not be contented with their great Lordships, and large dominions, without they might Lord it over the Consciences of others, which proved to bee their ruine, and now they be cast out with shame, as an abominable branch.

Our New Presbyters, who so cryed downe their Pathers the Bishops, and proclaimed against them for their cruelties, and in forcing men to a blinde obedience, Are they more moderate? Nay, These our pretended Reformers, since they have beene backed by Authority, and set up their great Idol, Kingdomes-deviding, breaking Covenant, by this new forgery, they endeavour and threaten to enslave all men to their lawlesse lusts. Doe they not cry out, No Covenant No Parliament; as the Prelates did, No Bishop No King; every Parish Priest

more Lording it, then any Prelate ever did. surely their destruction will be sudden, if they longer persist in these Godlesse courses: with our Priests, our new State Politicks comply; by this new devised Covenant: they to hold up their faction, have cast off, or kept out of all place and office such as bee conscientious or honest; but lest their Fathers the Prelates in case ever should recover their former power and credit should condemn them in their Convocation house, for Hereticks, these pretenders and great Reformers, as they retain their old Names and Offices of Parsons and Vicars, so are they zealous observers and maintainers of the old Popish Ceremonies, as swearing upon a Book, ringing of Bells for the dead, sermons, reading and praying for and over the dead, which to do, their dear brethren of Scotland do abhorminate, having rejected the same as Antichristian: But lest any should think what I have said touching our Covenanting Magistracy and Ministry to bee out of disaffection to their Cause, and not of Truth; I know that the great masters of this City, who so cry up the Covenant, will not admit any the freedome thereof, notwithstanding they have served seven yeares for the same, without submitting to Book-swearing: the other day the Major and Chamberlaine of this Metropolis put backe and denyed one his freedome because hee would not take th<sup>e</sup> Freemans Oath upon a booke: Depositions of witnesses are now disallowed and rejected by our new Reforming Justices, without the same be sworn upon a Book, as I can prove: These our Reformers doe they not discover how ready they will be to face about, and willing to bow againe under the Episcopall yolk, by their continuing the Statutes  
in

in force, for not repairing to the Book of Common Prayer, the English Masse (as the Scots calls it:) for not repairing to the Common Prayer Booke, 34. persons in Cumberland, at Midsomer Sessions last, were indicted by Order of our Parliaments Justices t're: In Yorkshire the 15. of June, 1647. Mr *Worsley* had his Oxen and Cowes taken from him for his recusancy in not comming to the Common Prayer Booke, yet Papists in both these Countries are tollerated and protected. Let Scotland beware whiles they contend for Conformity, they again set not up our English Dagon: but passing by formalities, let both Kingdomes secure their owne Peace, by yeelding to publick liberty and exercise of Religion without making search of their friends Consciencs, which no force can master, but exulcerate rather, and make worse, as (Courteous Reader) thou maiest well discover by this ensuing discourse of Mr *Baldwin*, delivered to the King of Spaines own hand, which I have published for thine and my Countries peace, and how we ought to behave our selves towards men of different Judgements and Religions. For a Conclusion I give thee an exemplary act of Justice done by a Popish Earle upon a covetous and corrupt minister of Justice: If our Parliament thereby would bee stirred up so to punish their Delinquent Committeemen and wicked Judges; injustice and oppression would stand afar off, Justice depresse those factions which otherwise will break this Nation, whose welfare as my owne I desire.

*John Musgrave.*





A DISCOURSE  
OF  
Francis Bavdvvine,

Shewing the means to prevent the troubles of a Kingdom; and to root out Sects and Heresies.

*Delivered at a Conference to the King of SPAYNE,*  
Anno MDLXV.



ALL men which live under one King, are bound to seek the preservation of the public good and quiet, and the entertainment of the Kings greatness and prosperity, who is the Head of the Body, whereof we are members. I have thought that I am not to be taxed of arrogancie, if (according to the small Talent which I have received from the Lord) I endeavour to discourse briefly of the means that might be held in these times, in the which there is such great diversity of opinions : To prevent all troubles

*History of the  
Netherlands,  
written Anno  
1609. in folio  
356.*

bles and tumults that may arise, as we have learned by the example of our Neighbours; and withal, satisfie (as much as is possible) the will and pleasure of the King our Lord, whom by Gods law and commandment we are bound to obey and serve to the uttermost of our powers: seeing then as well here, as in France, England, Scotland, and Germany (although there be some small difference) a great part of the people are moved by exhortation and doctrine of those which they call Gospellers: (for that as they say, they make profession to receive nothing but what is expressly contained in the Doctrine of the Gospel, and of the Bible) rejecting the ancient and accustomed manner of serving God; as to go to masse, to confess, to receive the Sacrament, fast for certain daies, go on pilgrimages, and other like exercises; to joyn themselves to a new Doctrine and Religion, which they call Reformed. The question is, how (according to the Kings will and pleasure) the people may be maintained in the ancient Faith, without seeking any innovation; and if happily the means seems somewhat difficult, or rather impossible, how we may prevent and shun many inconveniences which may arise or grow by the diversity that is among the Inhabitants of the Country.

First, We must consider when any one speaketh of a Religion or Law, it is to be understood that he speaketh of the Faith and apprehension which men have conceived and imprinted in their hearts and mindes, touching God and his service; and also touching the doctrine of their salvation: Or else they comprehend not by this word Religion, but the exercise and outward profession, by the which we shew outwardly what we believe inwardly, or (at least) what we should believe in our hearts. As for the first, It is most certain that they which follow the new Religion, have a constant perswasion and impression in their hearts, that what they do and believe, is conformable to the word and commandment of God; and they must above all things obey their Creator; and rather endure death, and all the torments of the world, then willingly to go against his Word and commandments: Seeing then this maxime is graven in the hearts  
of

of men. It is more then reason that God our Creator prescribe us what law he please, and we are bound to obey him without any contradiction or exception whatsoever : which maxime is not possible to root out of their hearts, neither were there any reason to attempt it. There must then some other means be sought to divert them from their faith ; Many have thought it best to proceed by force and terror ; by fire, flames, and all sorts of torments ; to the end that those which have not yet embraced this faith, might by this means be terrified, to remain in their ancient manner of doing : but doubtless they are much abused, as reason and daily experience doth teach ; for how is it possible to force, and command the Conscience and minde by corporal violence ? How can any one persuade me that that man hath a bad faith, whom I see die constantly and joyfully, although I know not the ground of, the one nor the other ? Even as it is impossible for all the Monarchs of the world to keep the fire from exercising his heat when it encounters an object fit to burn ; In like sort it is as impossible for all men ( how mighty soever ) to restrain and hinder the spirit of man from discoursing and judging as he pleaseth, and not to apply himself to that which he findeth best to agree with his natural impression, the experience whereof is daily seen : For what hath it availed to have put to death so many poor souls for the faith ? whereto have served the fires, gibbets, scaffoldes, tortures, and torments which they have used in France, in England, yea and in these Countreies ? Without doubt, neither the power nor authority of men, nor the sharpness of all the torments in the world avail any thing in this point. The Kings of Egypt were mighty, but they could never command the consciences of the children of Israel. The Romans Emperors held almost all the world in subjection, who neither spared fire nor flames, crosses nor gibbets, cords nor tortures, nor any kind of torments that could be devised or invented, to root out the Christian faith, and to terrifie their subjects, to divert them, and to retain them in their ancient belief and Pagan Religion ; and yet they prevailed nothing in their designs, but contrariwise did much hinder their intents ; So that the



Christians were wont to use a common proverb amongst them, *That the blood of their Martyrs was the seed of their Churches.* And indeed *Julian* the apostate Emperor, a malicious and subtle man, seeing that to root out the Christian Religion, all his Predecessors had prevailed nothing, but contrariwise that it was much augmented by means of the persecutions; and that those which died for their faith, took it for a glory and honour; from that time forward he would no more persecute them neither by fire nor sword, nor by any corporal violence, although they hated him deadly; but sought by gentleness and persuasions to draw them from their Faith; and forbearing all outward violence, he sought by all policy to hinder their increase; wherein he prevailed much more; for that some through covetousness, others through ambition, suffered themselves to be perswaded to that wherunto they could not be forced by any violence or threats. I will not compare here this new kind of Doctrine, (which is now in question) with the Pagan Religion, (for it is not my intention to interpose my censure) but I will onely conclude, that in that which consisteth in the perswasion of the heart, corporal violence prevaleth no more then the vapour of wind that blows, to hinder the heat of the fire: And daily experience hath taught us.

The means then to divert them from their opinions, is to perswade them that their faith and belief is not conformable to the word of God: To effect the which, there is no other means then to give them free audience; to the end, that they may propound their reasons and motives with all liberty, and that they be confuted of error and heresie by the Word of God: If they remain obstinate, yet when this disputation and instruction shall be performed in the eye of the World, those that are weak shall by this means be perswaded not to follow their errors; for as for the obstinate, even as instruction would avail them little or nothing, so much less would fire or death turn them from their resolved opinions. But on the other side, those which behold others to die with such constancy, take a delight to seek the opinions; and they which by this means came to fall in the like  
inconveniences,



inconveniencies, should be wholly preserved, when they should hear them vanquished by the word of God, and by reasons which they cannot contradict. If then Prelats and Bishops trust in the bounty of their cause (as with all reason they ought) There is not in the world a better means to attain unto the Kings intention, and to prevent the multiplying of Sects, then to confer together publickly; that all the world may know, that the others do falsely brag, that they have the word of God on their side; for it is most certain, that when truth is compared with falshood, she must of necessity shew her beauty, and obtaine the Victory; discovering to the eye of all men, what is false and counterfeit; and by this means a great good shall rise; for that they which now know not what to follow in so great a diversity of opinions, may settle a firm judgment of the Truth, after that they have heard the grounds of either side; so as in conference all confusion and disorder, all noise and rayling be laid aside.

As wee have seene in the disputations and conferences which Saint Paul hath made, aswell with the Jews as against the Pagans; then presently those which sought the truth, knew that he had reason, and that the other were in error: so in the Councils of Nicene, the *Arrians* were admitted to propound their reasons and grounds with all liberty; and being convicted by the word of God of error and heresie, were forced for a time to desist from their enterprise: but presently after when they persecuted them, they had many disciples; some moved by pittie, some by their false perswasions; the which was the cause of great mischiefs and inconveniencies in the Church: Yea, in our time, we have seene in all places where the Anabaptists have beene persecuted, they have increased infinitely: And contrariwise, where they have been heard in publique conference and disputation, and convicted of error and heresie, by the word of God, they have had no more credit in the world; And therefore *Mabomet* hath so carefully forbidden that they should never dispute upon the points of Religion brought in by him; knowing well, that the truth being once confronted against his lyes, his doctrine of necessity must goe to smoake. Its a true marke, and a badge of truth, that it desires to

be known, made manifest, and debated; being like unto the Palm tree, the more it is deprest and charged, the higher and straighter it growes: For this reason the ancients did appoint to hold free and generall Councils every yeare; although by the corruption of time many abuses have beene brought in by the ambition and covetousnesse of those that should give their Voyces: So it is, that the Hereticks and Sectaries feare nothing in the World more, then to be made manifest; be it by a free and general council, or in any other place, where as matters may be freely debated on either side; the which we see at this day apparently in the Anabaptists, who fly all disputations more then death.

If then those which desire to root out this new Religion, which multiplies so fast, are assured of the bounry and truth of their cause, and of the falshood of their Adversaries.

There is no fitter means then to come publickly to field, and to give their adversaries free audience and leave to dispute: without doubt, if they maintaine heresies, there shall neede neither fire nor gibbets to hinder the course of their doctrine; for that the more manifest it is, the more it will decay: It will be to no purpose to say that they have been often heard and confuted; for admit it were so, yet a great multitude of people, which are inclined thereunto, deserve so much paine, as to bee instructed in hearing and examining their reasons: but when you have said all, they were never heard with patience; for when as *Luther* began to preach this doctrine in Germany, it was presently condemned by the Pope, and persecuted by all the Kings and Princes of Christendome: he was once called to be heard, but it was to see if hee would recant or maintaine his writings and his doctrine: And he on the other side protested nothing more, then the desire hee had to bee better taught and instructed by the holy Scripture. The like proceeding was held against *Iohannes Huss*, at the council of Constance, who was never heard in his own defence; but as soon as he was arrived there, they laid before him certain Articles, drawn by some adversary of his, out of his books, asking him if he would maintain those Articles, which were reprov'd and condemned by the holy Church; and thereupon they gave sentence that

that he was an heretick, and damned; the which the world sees to be against all right and reason. To say that those were condemned by other Councils before, is nothing to the purpose; for if it be so (as they say) it will be the more easie to overthrow them now; for that the ancients have never condemned any doctrine, but that which they held contrary to the word of God; the which they have alledged to that effect: I say, to confute errors and heresies. So as now the way shall be traced, and they shall need only to quote the same scriptures to confute these: for that the word of God remaineth eternally, and the scripture hath now as much force and vertue to confute heresies as ever. But to condemne them by the very name and authority of some Councils, without alledging the scriptures, and reasons of the said Councils, were out of reason; for they submit themselves to prove, that the Councils (by the which their doctrine hath beene condemned) were but petty Councils, assembled and allowed by the tyranny of some who alone have decreed what they pleased, against the authority of the scriptures; without hearing or admitting of their adverse parties. And doubtlesse in the ancient primitive Church, there were many Bishops which have rejected some Councils, as suspect, and not lawfully, nor grounded upon the authority of the word of God; but upon the authority of men: as we read of Maximus Bishop of Ierusalem, and of St Hillary Bishop of Poitiers; yea, and of St Athanasius, Christostome, and Photinus; so it is not without reason, if many ages alter them there have been Councils suspected to these men: But as for the most Ancient and Received on either side, they are content to allow of them, so far forth as they prove their sayings by the word of God: There resteth then nothing but that their reasons may be heard, that the truth may be known, and their heresies and errors avokted; seeing there is no other means to procure a publick peace, and to draw all the subjects to one Religion; that if their adversaries (as if there were no controversie in this point) challenge the name of the Church, and without hearing their reasons examined by the scriptures, will that all that they shall ordaine or decree, shall bee infallibly kept as an ordinance of the Church, and so of God; as they have done in the last Council.

Council of *Trent*, where the Pope was head, and the adverse party not called, but to be condemned and judged according to the ordinance of the Church (that is to say, of the Pope and Prelates) or els to recant, and then to bee received into favour: Without doubt there will be never any means to draw them from their beliefe, seeing this *Maxime* will alwayes remaine graven in their hearts; that they must in all things follow the word of God, which alone hath authority to judge all Controversies, and to define which is the true and the false Church; which *Maxime* can never be wrested away by the authority of any man; much lesse that the Pope and Prelats, have any such Credit: not by fire nor sword, so as if their adversaries would not give them free audience, (as it is said) but use violence: they should but impair their own Cause, and make theirs better and more favourable whom they seek to root out. Seeing then it is a *Maxime* or point resolved upon among all men of Judgement, that touching the Faith and inward Beliefe, no Corporall violence can command; and that men must be confuted of error in their Consciences; we must examine the second point which wee have propounded; which is, Whether it were not possible to hinder the outward exercise of their Religion, forbidding them to assemble, preach, teach, nor to make any outward profession of that which they beleeve in heart.

And first, In it were feasible, whether it were fit and convenient to do it: No religion whatsoever can subsist, if it hath not some exterior exercises or ceremonies by the which it may be entertained; whereupon the Emperor *Gratian* was wont to say, that it was necessary the people should be maintained in some outward discipline of some Religion, whatsoever it were, good or bad. For as man by nature is enclined to reject the yoke of God, it is necessary he should be kept in awe and discipline, else hee would bee like an untamed horse, rejecting the fear of God and man.

Being then impossible to root out the Faith which they have in their hearts, it were not convenient (although it were possible) to hinder their exterior discipline and exercises, by the which the people are maintained in their Religion, and in the feare of God,  
and

and of the Magistrate, unless ( whereas in their Assemblies they are taught to be good men , and to fear God , and honour the King and his officers ) they will make them wicked Atheists, Libertines, and seditious, perturbers of all good order and policy; as we see plainly by daily experience : For we see a number which have cast off the yoke of the Romish Church, mocking at the Masse and Priests; yet fear to lose their goods or honours, refuse to apply themselves to discipline and exercise of any other Religion; have become very Atheists, without faith or law : Yet there are no small number of villanous Libertines, which make sects of themselves; teaching that we must not serve God outwardly with any exterior form or discipline, but onely in spirit; and under this pretext, they give themselves to all villany and abomination; to murders, rapes, incests, and adulteries; holding that the outward things serve to no end, so as the heart be cleer, as they perswade themselves.

Yea, some have been so audacious as to vaunt themselves to be, Christ himself. Others, the Spirit of God : And others Charity. To conclude, they are prophane people, and contemners of God and the Magistrate; maintaining that there ought not to be any sword or superiority used among men, but that the spirit should rule, govern, and guide the heart of man as it pleaseth : The which groweth through no other occasion, but seeing the great abuses which have reigned, and do still reign in the Church; and not being suffered on the other side to joyn themselves to any discipline and exercise of Religion; they are grown to that pass, as to think that dissimulation is not bad, so as the heart be good : and so mocking at Religion ( whereof they make a shew ) they must needs fall into wicked Atheism : And there are none in the world more seditious and greater disturbers of all good order, then these people : as hath been seen in the Anabaptists of Munster, and their like. For the rooting out of which, there were no better means ( whoso would consider all things without passion ) then to suffer them, yea to command them expressly, that all them which make profession of the Religion ( which they call Reformed ) should assemble in view

of all the world, and keep good discipline, fit for the obedience which they owe unto God, and the Magistrate correcting vices and excess: for although there were no other good, yet by this means they should get thus much, (which is of great importance for the preservation of the publick quiet) That whereas we daily see spring up new and abominable sects, full of sedition and mutinies, yea, and of horrible blasphemies against the Majesty of God; when as there should be but two publick kinds of profession in the view of all the world, either of them performing the obedience which they owe unto God and the King; when as any new one should spring up, it would be easie to suppress it by the word of God. But forasmuch as this seemeth strange to some to give Hereticks leave to sow their heresies: let us see if it be possible to suppress their assemblies: And doubtless if we look unto experience, (the perfect mistress of all things) we shall find it is as impossible to hinder it, as it is impossible to keep them from believing of that which they think fit and agreeing with the word of God. Have we not (I pray you) seen the great power of the most victorious Emperor Charles the fifth (of famous memory, who made all the world to tremble? Have we not seen his most incredible diligence to suppress this Religion? Have we not seen the rigorous edicts which he made? and whereto tended it, but to hinder the preaching of this new Religion; and that they which made profession thereof, should forbear their Assemblies? For he knew well their hearts could not be forced; and yet he prevailed nothing, notwithstanding all his prohibitions: It may be they assembled in some strange Country where they had greater liberty: No, no, but contrariwise, all the Princes of Christendom together with the Pope, were resolved to root them out, and to give them no place of retreat; but all was in vain. How do we then think that the Kings power (the which out of doubt is not greater then the Emperors) can hinder it? seeing that now, France, England, Germany, Scotland, and all the Countries about, are open unto them, to retire themselves, and to use the liberty that is here denied them; whereas they have so many Kings and Princes on  
their

their side; whereas the number is multiplyed by many and infinite thousands; without doubt, they which gave his Majesty this counsel, shew plainly, that either they want judgment, or else they seek to settle their own greatness, to the prejudice of the Kings, and the ruine of the Countrey; Let them examine all the Histories of the world, and they shall find, that when any new Religion hath been grounded upon the inward perswasion of the word of God; that all the striving in the world could never hinder, but the exterior discipline thereof would have its course.

The Romane Emperors could never force the Jews to receive their Statues into their Temples; nor hinder the Christians from their Assemblies; who desired rather to live like savage beasts in caves and rocks, then to abandon the exercise of their Religion. I will not examine whether their quarrel be like unto this; so it is, that they are as well perswaded in their hearts that they follow the word of God, and that they are commanded to assemble and preach, as they were; which perswasion can never be wrested from them by any violence; for they say among themselves, that if they should be allowed to believe what they would, so as they would forbear to reach and assemble; were as much as if they should suffer a man to live, so as he would take no refection and nourishment: for they maintain that faith is entertained by the preaching of the word, even as the life of the body is by the nourishment of meat. But admit it were possible to forbid their Assemblies; they must proceed either by rigor and force, or by gentleness and perswasions: that is, they must either corrupt them, or else force them to do against the testimony of their consciences, and so falsifie their faith which they owe unto God. It is most certain that the constant and vertuous will rather choose a thousand deaths, then to do any thing against their Consciences; so as with them there were nothing to be gotten. As for the rest who for fear or hope would deny their faith; First, they should grievously offend the divine Majesty, and damn their own souls by this falshood and dissimulation, for that they should sin doubly: first to have embraced the error, and afterwards more to have fal-



fified their faith and testimony of their Conscience, and to have  
 deakt doubly; whereas God requireth sincerity and plainness: so  
 as they that should force themthereto, should be the cause of their  
 more grievous damnation. They then which counsel the King  
 to force or corrupt his subjects, to the end that they should dissem-  
 ble and make shew of any other Religion then that which they  
 believe in their hearts, are the cause of the disloyalty which they  
 commit against God and the King; for without he shall carry  
 himself disloyally to God either for fear or hope; it is to be pre-  
 sumed that by the same passions he will carry himself as disloyally  
 unto the King, when as time and occasion shall be offered. *Con-*  
*stantius* father to *Constantine* the Great, although he were a Pa-  
 gan, yet he called Christians into his Court, and admitted them  
 to favour, whom he did see ready to abandon goods and honours,  
 yea their own lives; rather then to be disloyal unto the God  
 whom they did worship; yea, he held them worthy of his  
 friendship, and did impart unto them most of his important af-  
 fairs. And in-truth the King hath no Subjects more faithful then  
 those which obey him for Conscience; that is to say, because  
 God hath so commanded it: they which falsifie their conscience  
 to please the King, or for any other private respect; shew that  
 they do not obey the King for Conscience onely, but for some  
 other particular affection: and if they make no difficulty to fal-  
 sifie their Consciences in the service of God, without doubt it is  
 to be feared that when any passion or affection should move  
 them, either the fear of death, or the losse of goods and credit,  
 or some such like thing; they would make no great difficulty to  
 falsifie their faith which they owe unto their King: so as they  
 which give this Counsel unto the King, shew their ignorance;  
 for that they seek to root out them which in simplicity and sin-  
 cerity of heart yeild obedience unto God and the King. And as  
 for those which proceed disloyally and against their Conscien-  
 ces, they are not onely content to suffer them, but also to ad-  
 vance them unto honour: as we have seen by some examples of  
 those, who (before having made profession of this Religion)  
 have afterwards without being condemned of error, onely



to aspire to honour and credit, turned their Coats.

To conclude, Although it were a thing possible to force or corrupt the Protestants to abandon their Religion, and to doe against their Consciences; yet were it not expedient for the good of the Common-weal. But as I said, It is not possible to hinder them, unless they will ruine them, and put them to death; the which were hard to compass; for in the place of one (they should put to death) ten others would rise: and those which dy so constantly, (rather then remove their faith,) are held for good men, by the common people, who have more regard to the constancy, then to the cause which they maintaine: whereupon they have desire to examine the Cause, and come to fall into the same opinions; so as this must needs cause them to multiply and encrease: wherefore they that advise the King to this means, are much abused; for besides that they frustrate his Majesties intention, they thrust the Countrey into great desolation, and almost apparant danger of a ruine; yet it is plainly to be seene, that the Arts, Occupations and trades, by meanes whereof this Countrey was wont to flourish above the rest, do now decay, and are transported to their neighbours; the ancient enemies to the house of *Burgoin* and *Austria*.

It is almost incredible what prejudice the persecutions have brought within these forty yeares to the making of Cloth, and Sayes, and Tapestry: which trades being (as it were) proper and peculiar to the Netherlands; they have chased away by this means to the French, English, and other Nations: I forbear to speak of an infinite number of other good and profitable trades, which are retired into forraigne Countreys, to enjoy the liberty of their Consciences: For in generall, all the trafique of Marchandize hath been wonderfully interested, (as many good men can witnesse) In Antwerp, Lilee, Torney, Valenciens, and other such Townes: and this hath beene one of the chiefe occasions why of late years the English have beene perswaded to leave Antwerp, and goe to Embden; that is to say, from the flower of all Marchants townes, full of infinite Commodities; to a petty Towne, (obscure, and of no commoditie:) Yea, they are grown

so proud, by reason of this Drapery (the spoiles of his Majesties Netherlands) as they seeme to have no care to compound; thinking that we have more need of them, then they of us. The French in like sort brag, that they are clothed with our spoils, by reason of the Marchants that are fled for Religion: so, as that which did serve them as a bridle, to bring them the sooner unto reason, in time of warre, will now make them more proud and untractable.

Besides, It is well known, that within the Countrey there be many sufficient Marchants; which (upon this occasion) refuse to contribute in time of necessity; fearing that this question of religion, will be a subject unto their enemies, to make them confiscable.

But above all, It is to be considered, That the profession of Armes and Warre, (which hath beene flourishing in these parts) hath, and will be greatly interested, (if it be not other wayes prevented) I will not speak of many Gentlemen, good and faithfull subjects, which might doe good service to his Majesty, which are now retired to their houses; fearing for this onely occasion, to employ themselves in any occasion whatsoever. Neither will I say, that many others, who desired to doe the King good service (yea, even of those which knew the seats and situations of Countreies) are forced to leave their native soyle, and to retire to their enemies; preferring the liberty of their Consciences, before all things in the world.

Without doubt there must a care be had; for if any war should happen, either against the English, French, or any other neighbour Countrey; wee know not whom to trust: and without doubt, the enemies will not forget to make their profit upon this occasion, by all manner of practises; to the great prejudice of his Majesty, and all his Countrey: and it is to be feared, that among so many men, there will bee some, which (under colour to seeke their Liberties) will bee perswaded to attempt some Innovations.

The desire to live, and serve God in Liberty of Conscience, is of so great force, as it makes men forget all other affections and passions

passions, how vehement soever, for it not only maketh the subject neglect the duty which he oweth to his naturall King and Prince, but it doth even estrange the hearts, and withdraw the affections of Fathers and Mothers from their Children; yea, it maketh them forget themselves: so as they make no difficulty to expose their bodies to the burning flames, and to all sort of torments, and to abandon wife and children, leaving them nothing but poverty and famine, rather then to lose this good, in regard whereof, there is nothing in this world that they esteem.

So that it is no wonder (which some report for a truth) that many among the Gascoignes and Provencials, (during the persecutions in France, for matter of Religion) have treated to yeild themselves tributary to the Turk, hoping that by that meanes, they would suffer them to live in liberty, (which they valued above all things, and it may be they had put it in execution (to the great prejudice of all Christendom) if one onely respect had not restrained them, which was, that they held it too grievous, to give their first borne children to the great Turk, to be bred up in *Mahomet's* Religion: for this affection is incredible, and exceedeth all others: the which being well considered (with the great diversity of humours and conditions of men: it were no strange thing, if in so great a multitude of them that are persecuted for their Conscience, some should be found more suddaine or more revengefull or impatient then the rest, who would make no difficulty to attempt such exploits: yea, if it were but to revenge the grievous wrongs and injuries that were done for that Cause unto their kinsfolks and friends; wherein it is greatly to be considered, that there are no forts nor castles that maintain Kings in their greatnesse, so much as the faithfull love of their subjects: So contrarywise, the King doth but provoke their hatred against his Majesty: yea, who otherwise are good and wel-governed men, and live without reproach.

If the Inquisitors and their adherents, feare not the Hugonots, for that (as they say) they have not the wit to revenge themselves, who maintain, that they must do good for evil, yet they may well have heard the common Proverb, that patience too much

much urged, in the end turneth to fury: And if they be not void of all sense, they must thinke, that all the Kinsfolks, friends, and allies of them that they persecute, are not of one minde, and equall patience, that they can so easily passe over the wrong which they thinke they have received: so although there were no danger they should attempt any thing against his Majestty, or his estates; yet will they carry an irreconcilable hatred against his Officers; whereby there will grow bad intelligence amongst his subjects; which is a matter (as every man knowes) of very great importance: as we may well see by the troubles of France, the which partly took their beginning from such occasions; and it is most manifest, that if King Henry, or his Father, King Francis, had in their times granted free exercise of Religion, (restraining them with good Lawes and Ordinances) without doubt, they had left their Realme much more happy and flourishing, and had prevented so many calamities which have ensued.

I know there is some will say, the like is not to be feared here, considering the small numbers there is; and therefore it were no reason, that for a handfull of men, and of the baser sort, they should bring in any innovation.

But they that use such speeches, discover their grosse ignorance, or their unsupportable malice: If there be any question to give assistance to the Inquisitors, to install the new Bishops, or to send Garrisons into any Townes; then can they say, except they use extreme rigour, and great diligence, it will not bee possible to maintain the ancient Religion; Importuning the Court, with their continuall complaints, how wonderfully the Hereticks doe multiply.

But if there be any question to finde some milde and fit course to settle the Countries quiet, without any great effusion of blood; then they say, there are so few Hugonots and of so base qualitie, as nothing ought to be altered for them: So as any man may easily see, that their intent is to maintain themselves onely in their greatness, were it with the totall ruines of his Majesties Countries: and they that doe earnestly affect the Kings greatness, and the preservation of his subjects, much reject them, as partiall, and suspect,

suspect; and make diligent information and search of the number, quality, and sufficiency of them that desire to be the Kings faithful subjects, so as they may satisfie and enjoy their consciences; and without doubt you shall find a greater number then is generally believed: let them look to the multitude of those that are retired into England, where they have their publike Assemblies in infinite number; then let them turn unto those that are gone into France, in as great numbers: from them let them number up them that are at Franckfort, Straesburgh, Hiddelburgh, Franckendal, Collen, Aix, Dousburgh, Embden, Geneva, Hamburg, Breme, and other Towns of the East Countries; without doubt (in my opinion) they shall find an hundred thousand; and as for those which remain yet in the Countrey, it is most manifest there are many more. There hath somtimes been seen at an assembly or preaching at Tournay, four or five thousand persons; the like hath been known at Valenciennes; beside those that have remained secretly in their houses; else the Garrisons had been needles which have been sent thither; if the multitude had not been so great: It is thought that Lille hath not many less; who so will look into the petty Towns and neighbour Villages, shall undoubtedly find an infinite number: come into West-Flanders, the numbers are wonderful great, notwithstanding any pursuit or search which the Dean of Rennay hath made. Have we not seen at Missennes (as I remember) seven or eight hundred Country-men force the Prison, and deliver a Prisoner, and they could never discover who they were? I leave Eand, Brugges, and Yperen, in which notwithstanding are good numbers. What multitudes meet together at Antwerp is apparent; and at Brussels where the Court remaineth, yet can they not by any means keep them from assembling themselves together in good numbers. What shall I speak of the Countries of Holland, Zeland, Gelderland, and Friesland? where it seemeth they have greater liberties: and in truth, the officers dare make no more searches nor executions, by reason of the great numbers. Have we not seen at Vtrecht, an Episcopal Town, and full of rich Chanons, one called *Tbijs* or *Stephen*,

preach this doctrine publicly, for the space of a whole year, in the view of the whole world, in despite of all such as did oppose themselves; and notwithstanding all their pursuit, yet could they never apprehend him, for that all the people did accompany him both going and coming out of the Church, so that sometimes he was carried upon their shoulders; and lodges sometime in one house, sometime in another? whereby we may see, that the number is not so small, as some maintain: Yea, they complain that they cannot furnish them with Ministers and Preachers enough. Without doubt, if they were gathered together in one place, as well those which are retired, as they which remain; there would be found at least two or three hundred thousand; if they will have respect to them that are of the same opinion and dissemble, attending some change or fitter opportunity, I do certainly believe that all joyned together, would equal the number of the rest, so that they which maintain that the number is so small, and that for them they should not alter nor change any thing, shew that they have no sense nor judgment, or else that they would reign alone in the world.

Whereas they say that they are all people of a base condition; The contrary hath been seen in Germany, France, England, Scotland and Denmark; whereas not onely the common people, but also Princes and Kings have embraced this Religion: and doubtless if they might discover themselves without danger of life and goods, they should also find here a great number of Gentlemen, and others of good sort, that would declare themselves to be of their party; but although the number were not so great, yea if there were but very few, yet it were besitting the clemency of a King, to have regard unto the health of the meanest of his subjects. The Emperor Trajan was wont to say, that he had rather save one Citizen and subject, then defeat a whole army of his enemies; a speech worthy of a Monarch and Emperor: such then as think they should not spare to ruine (as much as in them lies) the bodies and souls of the Kings poor subjects, shew themselves ignorant what Christianity, Humanity, or the Clemency of a King means or requires; the very name

name whereof, makes his fame more glorious than all the trophies and victories that he could obtain of his enemies.

But they will say that these men are wicked and prophane, and that they corrupt the rest : whereunto I answer, that the point of Religion onely excepted, whereon it is not my intention here to judge; you shall find that they are otherwise good men, fearing God, yeilding obedience to the King and Magistrate, and doing wrong to no man; although there be some that cover themselves with their name, and are not so : the which happeneth for that they are not suffered to have the exercise of their Religion as they would : and as for the point of their Religion, let it be what they please : but so it is, they are not all persecuted so much for that they follow heresie and error; but for that they are constant and faithful in that which they think conformable to the word of God : for they suffer them to believe what they please (which indeed they cannot hinder) so as they will be disloyal, and hypocrites; and seeing they submit themselves to be instructed by the word of God, there is no reason to esteem them so wicked : Moreover, we must in despite of our selves confess, that the greatest and best wits, and the most leaped men maintain their party; I will not disgrace the others, but if we will lay by all favour and affection, we shall find, that the most excellent wits have been and are of their profession : Yea, the reformation of Arts and Sciences (which were buried in darkness) is come from them; the knowledge of the Tongues, especially of the Greek and the Hebrew, hath been beautified more by them then by any others. To conclude, their adversaries themselves are forced to confess, that there are singular men among them in all sort of sciences : besides that the life of many of them is irreprehensible. If then there were not so great a number as there is, yet they should have respect not to ruine and chase away those whom God hath endued with such excellent graces; and deprive the King and his Countries of so great a good, in chasing away or murdering them which might have served either for Counsel, Learning, or some other way; seeing it is ordinarily found, that they desire to yeild all



obedience and duty unto the King, and to serve him with body and goods, so as they would leave them the exercise of their Religion free.

To conclude then, If his Majesty will be pleased to grant this liberty, he should not onely prevent troubles and inconveniences which have hapned in France, and else-where, through this occasion, but also it should be a means by the which his subjects should be induced every one to imploy himself in his vocation, to the service of his Majesty, and the advancement of the Common-weal; seeing that in the end they should be forced to come unto it, were it after his decease; as in other Countries where the like accidents have hapned.

It remains now to consider the inconveniences that may arise, the which I find to be two principal: The first, that if the exercise of their Religion were allowed them, they might multiply in such sort, as the ancient Religion would decay, and come to nothing; the which the King would not endure by any means. The other is, They hold commonly that in one Country there cannot be two divers Religions, without great trouble and disorder.

As for the first, they must understand that all Religions are either grounded upon the authority of God, or the authority of men: For a Religion may be grounded upon the authority of men, when having regard unto that which our Ancestors have done and followed, or to that which our King commands, or to that which some great personage doth enjoyn us, we ground our Religion upon those respects, without any firm reason, or feeling in our hearts, that we do well or ill: as the Turks, Pagans, and Idolaters have alwaies done; yea and the greatest part of the world do at this day; changing their Religion and manner of serving God, in what sort, and as often as it shall please the King, or those to whom they shall defer this credit: but for that those Religions proceed not from a Religious heart fearing God, but from the respect and reverence of men, it is easie to hinder the course, and to plant in other by humane means; as by armes and violence: so as it was no difficult thing for the  
Romanes



Romanes to bring their Gods and Religions into Greece, and other Countries of their conquests, the which were grounded but upon the authority of their Princes and Kings. But if the Religion hath its foundation upon the authority and word of God, upon the testimony of their Consciences, be it with reason or otherwise; force or outward violence cannot prevail; as we have shewed; and there is no means to hinder the course and progresse thereof, but in shewing the foundations ill laid. If then the King will maintain the old Religion, and stop the course of the new, it is necessary that he give them leave to be heard; to the end that they may be confuted; and that all the world knowing wherein the abuse doth consist, may fly their acquaintance: If it be heresie they sow, ye cannot but stop the course in suffering them to publish their doctrine, so that their errors be laid open to the people by the truth of the word of God; else the more you seek to suppress it, the more it will encrease. But contrariwise, if happily their doctrine be conformable to the word of God, it is not to be presumed that his Majesty would oppress it. Wherefore that inconvenience alledged, is of no consequence.

The second point alledged, seems to be of great moment: For they say commonly, that for to entertain the publike quiet, we must have but one Law, one Faith, and one King: a thing without doubt which were much to be desired, for it would us liken to that golden age. But seeing that Religion and faith is a meer gift of God, engraven in the heart of man, over the which none can command but God onely: It were great indifferetion to think it possible to reduce all the Inhabitants of one Country to one Faith by force or corporal violence. It is true that they say that as in a Family the Father ought to foresee that all those of his house worship but one onely God, and be of one Religion; so the King should provide that in his Realm there should be but one Faith, and one Law; the which were wonderful good and healthful, but it is not possible to attain unto it, if it be not among those people whose Religion is grounded upon the Kings simple Authority; the which is no true

Religion, but a meer hypocrisie and counterfeiting; whereunto they may haply be drawn which have no fear of God: As it was seen among the Romans, who received as many new Gods as their Emperours commanded them: but this will never take place among them which have any inward feeling grounded upon any reason, be it upon the word of God, or of their own Conscience: In which case ye are so far from reducing a whole Nation to one Religion, as you can hardly reclaim one Family: the which was manifest among the Jews; where there were three famous Sects more contrary the one unto the other, then those of the new Religion unto them that maintain themselves under the ancient obedience of the Pope.

But which is much more from the beginning of the world, unto this day, it was never seene that all were of one law, and one faith; no not according to the exterior exercise. For before the comming of Christ, the Kings, of Egypt, Persia and Babylon, were forced to leave the Jews in their Countrey, and to allow them the free exercise of their Religion, the which they held abominable.

And after his comming, the Romane Emperours have also suffered it; as *Antonius Pius*, and *Mark Antonie*, not that they were of one accord with them: (for they had the name of a Christian in horror) but for that they found they were not seditious, nor disturbers of the publique quiet; and so of many other Emperours who have suffered them, and forbidden that no injury should be done them, although they were of a meere contrary opinion.

True it is, that some one may say, That all these Examples serve but to advance the Christian faith, which the King intends to maintaine, in rooting out the new Religion.

Yet it is most manifest, It is no new thing to endure two Religions in one Countrey, yea, and that all wise Kings and Princes have done according to the necessities of the time; for although the Religion of those Emperours were bad, yet they held it good and holy, as the King holds his, and it was the Religion which they received from their Ancestors, above three thousand years past.

But

But wee finde also, that Christian Emperours have endured false Religions, as it appears by the example of *Theodosius*, *Honorius*, and *Arcadius*, who gave Temples to the *Arrians* and *Novations*, sometime within, and sometime without the City, as the necessity of the time and place required.

In the Ecclesiastical History, It is reported for a remarkable thing, that *Valentinian* the Emperour, was Orthodox, and a good Christian, yet he suffered the *Arrians*, though he favoured them not so much as the others: *Maximus* his Colleague or Companion in the Empire, was an *Arrian*, and would by no means suffer the Christians in his Government, but did persecute them in all sorts, whereby we may easily gather, that in all well governed common weales, to avoid sedition and tumults, it is sometimes necessary to grant Temples unto Hereticks, not to the intent they should disperse their Heresies more, but that the people hearing the truth confronted with falsehood, might (without mutinies or tumults) apply themselves quietly unto the true and right Religion. But our Lord and Saviour saith, that he came to bring war, and not peace into the world, for as in one house there shall be dissension betwixt the Father and the Son, the Brother and the Brother: How can we then maintain the Religion of Jesus Christ, if they will reduce all the world to one faith, and to one Law, seeing that for the ordering thereof, he doth not command the faithfull to kill the rest, but contrarywise he saith, that the Apostles and faithfull, should bee betrayed, excommunicated, and put to death, for their faith and Religion, and therefore he will have them win the field through patience and the vertue of his word? So as I cannot wonder sufficiently at the impudency of these men, who making a shew to be well read in all ancient Histories, do maintain, that there were never two different Religions in one Common weale: for what will they say on answer to the diversity already alledged, betwixt the Pharisees, Sadduces, and Esses; without doubt, they shall never finde, that by reason of these Sects, there was any great difficulty in the Government, nor that Jesus Christ, nor his Apostles, did ever command to burne them for their Law.

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What shall we say of the diversity of Religions that were among the heathen, whereof one did not know anothers Gods, No not the Names? And some also maintained publicly, that God did not care for humane things: And yet wee finde not, that the Government of the Romanes was troubled for this cause.

But who doth not see at this day, under the great Turk, a great diversity of Religions, so as among the Christians alone, there are fifteen or twenty Sects and sundry Religions: besides the Jewes, Persians, and Mahumatists, all subjects to his Empire; the which are more contrary the one to the other, (for matter of Religion) then water is contrary unto fire.

Without doubt, if these diversities were the true cause of seditions and tumults, It were not possible that the Turks power should grow so great: It is then a great ignorance to think that subjects cannot be maintained in quiet, when they are of divers Religions; for who so will look neerly to the spring and beginnings of tumults and seditions, he shall find that they proceed not so much from the diversity of Religions, as through private passions; as through covetousness, ambition, revenge, hatred, and such like, from the which small quarrels may grow; and when the Magistrate prevents it not in time, then by little and little they inflame, and are cause of tumults and publike seditions: witness the troubles and seditions in Italy betwixt the *Guelphs* and *Gibelines*, the which continued four hundred years, and was the cause of infinite murders, rapes, wars, and all sorts of violence; and yet there was no difference in the Religion, but all did grow for that the Magistrate did feed the private passions of their Subjects, instead of suppressing them by Justice. And as for controversies touching Religion, it is not two hundred years since that the controversies betwixt the *Franciscans* and the *Jacobins* for the Conception of the Virgin Mary, had caused great troubles throughout all Christendom: Not that the controversie was of any great importance, but through the negligence of the Magistrate, who nourished these factions, and became partisans. Seing then it appeareth that whereas good order hath been settled, people of divers sects and Religions have been quietly

ely governed, without any sedition or tumult; and contrariwise whereas no order was, not onely diversity of Religion, but even small quarrels have bred horrible seditions and tumults: any man of Judgement may gather thereby, that seditions and tumults take not their increase from the importance of the quarrel whereupon they are grounded; but rather through the want of good order, for that the Magistrates neglect to punish them that entertain them, or else themselves maintain one party: the which is confirmed by many ancient and modern examples. And who so will examine strictly the last troubles of France, shall find that the greatest part have hapned for that some mighty men or Governours themselves, having no regard to the publick good, nor to the ordinances of the States, have at their own pleasures plaid the Kings, and insulted of their own authorities over them of the Religion. I think no man is so ignorant, but knows that the murder committed at Valley by the Duke of Guise, against the laws of the King and State, hath been the true and onely cause of the Civil Wars which followed, to the ruine of the whole Realm: for whilest the Kings proceeded by their authority, there was no newes of any sedition, how grievous soever the persecution were; but when as Governours of their owne authorities, offered violence to those of the Religion, presently all these tumults grew; the which may serve us for a good example: whereby we may learn to avoid the like inconveniences, and take some good course for the benefit of the King, and of all his good subjects, which seek onely to obey him.

It is then easie to resolve that good order would be setled, if liberty shoud be granted to them of the Religion, to assemble and exercise their discipline, restraining and bridling them with such laws as shall be thought good, and that the Kings Magistrates and Officers be careful to execute his Majesties intention; foreseeing above all things, that the people usurp not the auctority of the sword under colour of the factions of great men; so as above all things there must be a prevention that all violence be forbore on either side, and that those which proceed by any other unlawful means, as by taxing and slandering, shall be well punished, which

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doubtless

doubles will be a most assured means, and the Subjects shall live in good unity and concord together, and will carry a perfect obedience unto his Majesty: and in the mean time truth will lay open falshood in such sort, as that the King shall not need to fear that heresies shall multiply by this means, to root out the truth; but contrariwise, we shall see truth flourish, and all heresies and false sects decay; Gods glory shall be generally celebrated, and the Kings Greatness and Prosperity increase. The which God grant us by his holy grace, to whom be all glory for ever and ever. *Amen.*



